Status of Plantation Industry

4291. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that coffee, tea and rubber enjoy the status of plantation industry;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government propose to give the same status to oilpalm, cashew and horticulture for better competitive advantage; and

(c) if so, by when such a decision is likely to be taken and if not, reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) It is felt that farmers can pool their existing holdings to obtain the benefits of large scale production.

Competitive Global Markets for Agricultural Products

4292. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that global markets for agricultural products are becoming more competitive;

(b) whether it is also a fact that a partnership of farmers, producers and exporters is necessary to achieve a breakthrough in those markets; and

(c) if so, steps Government propose to take in this direction ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is the strategy of the Government to step up production and productivity so as to generate exportable surpluses in the agricultural sector. Spices Board, Tobacco Board and the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) are agencies handling work relating to promoting and enhancing exports of various agricultural commodities. Interest of farmers/ producers and exporters are represented in the Boards of these organisations. Besides, co-operative organisations like the National Agricultural Co-operative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED), The Tribal Co-operative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd. (TRIFED), and the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), are also active in this export effort.

Guidelines for Foreign Collaborations and Joint Ventures

4293. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry have urged Government to issue comprehensive guidelines for foreign collaborations and joint ventures;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereon;

(c) whether Government propose to adopt any new guideline for foreign collaborations and joint ventures; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Tea Plantation on Experimental Basis

4294. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) the places in Orissa where the tea plantation has started on experimental basis;

(b) whether the experiment has proved economically viable; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to bring additional hectares of land in that State under tea plantation ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Tea plantation was started in the Keonjhar District of Orissa in the year 1984. This garden is run by M/s. Orissa Tea Plantation Ltd. and so far 213 hectares of the area has been brought und-

tea by the garden as against the targeted area of 400 hectares. Although the garden made a good start yet it faced difficulties due to labour disturbances resulting in lock out has since been lifted and normalcy has been restored. Tea produced by this garden has fatched attractive price in Calcutta auction in the past.

(c) Preliminary reports indicate that approx. 2000 hectares of land suitable for tea cultivation are available in Thomal Rampur Tehsil of Kalahandi Distt. and Darangabari in Phulbani Distt. The Government of Orissa have nominated the Industrial Development Corporation of Orissa Ltd. (IDCOL) as nodal agency for setting up of tea gardens in the above noted areas. The State Government have already handed over possession of 1200 hectares of Government land in Thomal Rampur to IDCOL. The Tea Board has provided a sum of Rs. 5 lakhs to M/s. IDCOL for raising nursery. M/s. IDCOL have indicated that 400 hectares of land have already been allotted to a private tea company.

Proposal for Comprehensive Export Package

4295. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce has recommended a comprehensive export package including allocation of certain percentage of the proposed export earning to the States for the development of infrastructure;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal formulated/finalised by Government in this regard;

(c) the details of the expected implications thereof in boosting the exports; and

(d) the details of the infrastructural facilities proposed to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce in its first report presented on 10-5-93, inter alia recommended close involvement of State Governments in export activities and allocation of additional funds to the extent of 5% of the export earnings from the unilocated in those States for development of infrastructure for export production.

(b) Measures taken to involve State Governments in export promotion activities and grant incentives to them are briefly given below:

(i) The States have been requested to formulate export policies on the lines of their industrial policy and chalk out time-bound export plans.

(ii) It has been decided to grant Export House status to one Export Corporation in each State nominated by the State Governments in relaxation of the minimum export earnings condition. So far 13 Corporations nominated by State Governments have been accorded Export House status.

(iii) The Export Promotion Industrial Parks (EPIP) Scheme has been finalised and circulated among the States. Under the Scheme, the Centre is to extend grant up to 75% of the Capital expenditure on infrastructure, ordinarily limited to Rs. 10 crores per park. Besides, for maintenance of facilities grant equivalent to 2% of the export turnover of each unit established in the Industrial Parks will be extended for a period of 5 years.

(iv) Constant Centre-State inter-face is being maintained on all important matters.

(c) and (d) The States are expected to provide infrastructural facilities like power, water, roads (including approach roads to the park), sewerage and drainage, tele communication and other facilities for the Export Promotion Industrial Parks. Such facilities shall be of high standards to ensure that the units established in the parks are able to function efficiently.

Setting up of Joint Venture and Wholly Owned Companies Abroad

4296. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration for setting up